

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T BUCHAREST 1614

EXDIS
C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARAGRAPH ONE)
E.O. 11652: XGDS 2 AND 3
TAGS: TSPA, ACOM, RO
SUBJECT: VIP TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

REF: STATE 062485

1. RE SECURITY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRANSACTION, IT APPEARS THAT SMALL US BUSINESS COMMUNITY HERE AWARE THAT AIRCRAFT/COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE HAS BEEN NEGOTIATED WITH US FIRMS. WE DOUBT THAT KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSACTION WIDESPREAD ON ROMANIAN SIDE BECAUSE OF INHERENT COMPARTMENTALIZATION IN GOVERNMENT. ROMANIANS HAVE NOT EXHIBITED UNDUE CONCERN ABOUT MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY AND THOSE WITH WHOM WE HAVE WORKED, SUCH AS ZGAVARDICI AND COSTESCU, HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THE SENSITIVE FATURE OF THE TRANSACTION ON THE US SIDE. HOWEVER, NOW THAT CONTRACT SIGNED, THEY MAY BELIEVE NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY HAS LESSENER. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES, WE CAN APPROACH ZGAVARDICI AGAIN ON THIS POINT. WE COULD ALSO ENQUIRE IF AIRCRAFT COULD BE DELIVERED TO DALLAS WITHOUT MARKINGS IF THAT WOULD HELP.

2. SINCE ROMANIANS BROACHED THE MATTER OF COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE FOR PRESIDENTIAL IL-62 WHICH WOULD REQUIRE WORK HERE BY SOVIET TECHNICIANS, WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT IF SOVIETS ARE NOT NOW PRIVY TO THIS TRANSACTION, THEY SOON WILL BE. WE

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DO NOT KNOW IF SOVIET TECHNICIANS HAVE ROUTINE ACCESS TO PRESIDENTIAL AIRCRAFT AND WILL MAKE SOME DISCREET ENQUIRIES ABOUT THIS.

3. PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU DOES USE HIS IL-62 FROM TIME TO TIME AND WE BELIEVE THAT REQUEST FOR INSTALLATION OF A COMMON SYSTEM ON THIS AIRCRAFT WHICH IS THE SAME AS THAT FOR 707 IS DESIGNED

TO ENSURE THAT IL-62 CAN SERVE AS FULLY EQUIPPED BACKUP PLANE.
WE ARE NOT INCLINED TO VIEW INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL PACKAGE
FOR IL-62 AS CRUCIAL TO COMPLETION OF ORIGINAL TRANSACTION.
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS FLOATED AT LAST MOMENT
TO TEST OUR REACTION TO THE STARTLING THOUGHT OF INSTALLING
THE BEST US TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT IN A SOVIET AIRCRAFT.
WE THEREFORE SUSPECT THAT IF STRONG CASE COULD BE MADE THAT
ADDITIONAL PACKAGE WOULD SERIOUSLY COMPLICATE EXPORT APPROVALS,
ROMANIANS WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE SERIOUS RECONSIDERATION TO AD-
VISABILITY OF ADD-ON. FROM OUR SCANTY KNOWLEDGE OF NEGOTIAT-
ING HISTORY WITH E-SYSTEMS, IT ALSO DOES NOT APPEAR THAT IL-62
PORTION WAS SWING FACTOR FOR AMERICAN COMPANY.

4. RE PARA 7 REFTTEL, COUNTERTRADE OR OFFSET TRADE PROPOSALS
ARE STANDARD PRACTICE FOR ROMANIAN TRADE ORGANIZATIONS. PRO-
POSAL MADE TO E-SYSTEMS WAS ALSO MADE TO COLLINS. IN THIS
INSTANCE, WHERE U.S. FIRM IS HIGHLY SPECIALIZED AND OB-
VIOUSLY NOT IN POSITION TO MARKET SUCH ITEMS AS BALL BEARINGS,
PROPOSAL IS ALMOST CERTAINLY UNLIKELY TO BE MAINTAINED AGAINST STRONG
RESISANCE. TRANSACTION WOULD GO INTO TRADE ACCOUNT
BOOKS AS PLUS ON ROMANIAN SIDE, AND THIS FACT COULD BE RAISED
IN CONTEXT OF BALANCE OF TRADE DISCUSSIONS, BUT PROSPECT SHOULD
NOT WEIGH HEAVY IN OUR POLICY DELIBERATIONS.
AGGREY

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